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As it was Intercepted,
And now Published
by *S.V.*

LONDON:
Printed in the Year M DC LXXIV.

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A Letter from the POPE.

DEar Sons, whom now thy Engliſh Den of Hereticks deſpiſe, who now are by them made the *Ludibrium hominum*, who for all your cunning ſtratagems and heroick Plots and Treaſons, and all your learning, yet (to my ſorrow I ſpeak it) you are likely both now to be driven out from, baniſhed, and utterly diſregarded by theſe *Hgonots* (ſilly Souls:) yet I your old Father, before I take my leave of the World and of you, which if Hereticks ſtill purſue to ſpit out their Malice againſt you my Sons the *Jeſuits*, and if as is reported the Penal Laws be put in execution againſt you, will ſuddenly put a period to this my now uncomfortable life. Yet ſtill me thinks I ought not to deſpair, but wait to ſee our Halcyon days, and Hereticks be again brought under the rod of our holy Inquiſition. You know Sons how I have erected Seminaries, and to what end; which my enemies do call bad Conventicles, no better then Cockatrices to hatch treaſon: in theſe I never thought any Coſt too dear, whereby either to make your Bodies fit for travail, or to help your natures inclination with fallacious art for the accompliſhment of our purpoſe. And now my Sons 'tis high time that you fall from contemplation to practiſe, or elſe I ſay all is loſt: for Proteſtants give out that Popery has ſeen its beſt days in *England*; and I hear the Parliament, that Pope-marring Aſſembly, will drive you like Foxes into corners: nay, I am informed that Heretick-like they have publickly burnt the effigies of my Holineſs; and that D. S. a leading man among theſe Hereticks, hath charged us with, nay not only charged, but proved that Catholicks are Idolaters; and that they make no more of confuting Cardinal *Bellarmine*, then drinking of a glaſs of Wine. Ah now what is become of all our ſubtilty? we are now begirt about with our Father the Divils deviſes. Now therefore ſeeing it is thus, let none of you ſcorn your Old Fathers directions: for though your younger years be riper in Art, yet my experience

may teach you what in great deſignes is to be affected. *Engliſh* you are, whoſe *Albion Cliffs* have heretofore ſeemed to my predeceſſors and me like Rocks of pure Diamond, where ſome have rightly loved us, and from the depth of their affection have embraced you my deareſt Children: but the greateſt part now purſue me with deadly hatred, terming me no better than a blood-ſucking *Cannibal*, a Robber of Churches, a Patron of Hereſies, a Father of Falſehood, the Broacher of Quarrells, the Seed-man of Sedition, the Infringer of Liberties, the Controler of Princes, the Enemy of Chriſt, the Monſter and Aſtoniſhment of Nature, in Chayning Chriſtians Souls in miſerable Thraldom, and more then Egyptian ſervitude.

But we expect the time when theſe Clouds may, nay will vaniſh: be not diſcouraged; you know after a ſtorm comes a calme, after Perſecution liberty; the thoughts of which is unto me as it were a Reſtorative, to revive my faint and languiſhing Spirits: which hope doth chiefly depend upon your cunning in compaſſing; and cunning conſiſteth in this which followeth: Firſt, that you work upon ſuch as are fit to be added to our Catholick faction; and ſecondly, in the manner of the performance. Thoſe that are the likelyeſt to be fitted to this frame, that is, to lend a hand when opportunity ſtrikes allarme (I ſpeak not ſons of thoſe who already are devout Catholicks, earneſtly expect, and heartily pray for ſucceſs in our Cauſe) either are Male-contents whom envy or malice may make deſirous of a change; or looſe profeſſors, who have lent their love to voluptuous delights or prodigalities, Children whom extreme want hath made deſperately minded; or wanton wanderers, whom long travail hath deprived of natural affection.

And thus began *Mahomet* to ſtrengthen his State, by joyning himſelf with the angry Souldiers of *Heraelius*, ſtirring up their minds againſt the Emperor, and encouraging them in their defection; whereupon in proceſs of time it came to paſs, that although many could not abide him, from the baſeneſs of his Birth, and odiouſneſs of his former Life; yet growing from a Thief to a ſeditious Souldier, and from a ſeditious Souldier to be Captain of a Rebellious hoſt, his Mahometical force began to ſubdue mighty people. Now as you muſt ſtrike with *Mahomet* while the Iron is hot, and work thoſe with diligence whoſe inclina-

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inclination you find pliable, ſo muſt your wiſdom appear in the manner of this work, wherein I would have you to propound to your ſelves the deceitfulneſs of the damned wretch before named.

I would not for all the world it were known, my Sons, that you followed ſo baſe a pattern of a cozening Knave, for an example of imitation: this *Mahomet*, not only to gratifie his Companions, but alſo the more eaſily to allure all Nations, received all Religions; the pertinacy of *Arrius*, the error of *Neſtorius*, the vain invention of the *Thalmudiſts*: therefore from the Jews he received Circumciſion, from the Chriſtians ſundry waſhings as it were Baptiſm, and with *Sergius* denyed Chriſt his Divinity.

Secondly, to inlarge his Kingdom, he made ſuch Laws as were fit to win and allure the vileſt; as to his *Arabians*, baſe wretches, accuſtomed to live upon ſpoil, he alloweth Theft, and ſetteth a Law for revenge: hurt him which hurt you; he that killeth his enemy, or is is killed by him, entreth into Paradice: he permits of having many Wives, Divorcement for trifling cauſes; promiſeth Paradice to them that give liberally, and fight for his ſake.

Thirdly, miſtruſting his fall, with many Bulworks hath he fenced his Law, that no way be open to ſubvert it; Firſt, by commanding to kill them which ſpeak againſt his *Alcoran*; Secondly, by forbidding men to confer with a contrary Sect; and thirdly, by prohibiting credit to be given to any of a contrary Religion.

Now Sirs, why ſhould not we prevail as well as this deceiver, whom for example I have mentioned to you my Children? have not we as many Motives, as plauſible Rhetoricians to perſwade? for Firſt, as he to allure all Nations received all Religions, ſo I your Old Father have found out ſuch a Religion as is compounded of all ſorts, that all might be pleaſed; and therefore our Enemies have called it the Cruſe and Budget of hereſies. Secondly, our Doctrines are as mighty to prevail, as ever were the Laws of *Mahomet*. If Old Men be covetous, their young men voluptuous, Nobles Ambitious, and the common ſort Ceremonious, we have ſuch allurements as are alſo to win them: to the rich covetouſneſs, with Craft and Cruelty, and the reſt of her factours,

factours, we have Coyned a Purgatory, the fire of our gain: to feed the voluptuous, our Religion admits simple Fornication, and our practise hath erected Stews: to draw on the Riotous, dissolute and idle do-nothings, we have ordained many odd Holy-days; at *Rogation* to carry Banners, after *Pentecost* to go about with *Corpus Christi*, play, and other knick-naks: nay, to encourage you in Treason or desperate undertakings, we have canonized *Garnet*, and other zealous Catholicks, who suffered Martyrdom for the Catholick Cause, after that heroick, and of all good Catholicks to be commended, though unfortunate Powder-Plot. To keep men from the sight of their sins, we have taught them to mince them, and that the first motions are no sins unless they go with consent, that some are venial, and need but an Asperge of Holy Water, or a Bishops blessing: to win ambitious hearts, that fain would be aloft, you must teach that my power is to give Kingdoms to such as can conquer them, and to discharge Subjects from their Oaths of Allegiance and Loyalty, as our *Pius* the fifth and *Gregory* the thirteenth did against that Heretick (though to all the world and to us our selves known most Virtuous) Queen *Elizabeth*. Further, we give immortality to such as can pluck the Crown from the Princes head; and tell you that (which is a most damnable lye, but no matter so long as the Catholick cause is advanced) to murder a Hugonot, or blow up at a blast an Heretical Parliament, are works meritorious.

If the people will know nothing, to fit their humours we teach that *Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion*, That *Images are books for Lay-men*, That *knowledge of the Scriptures makes Heresies*; and not as that Heretick Dr. *S.* teaches, that the Scripture ought to be the Rule of our Faith, but that it is sufficient that their faith be folded up in our Church-belief, without understanding or knowing what it is. Again, to please the multitude, and to draw them to our Side, we have holy Reliques (Oh most pretious!) Dispensations, Indulgences, and thousands of years of Pardon; and that Catholikes must believe not what Christ and his Apostles have taught, but what the Church believes, right or wrong; and that they ought to pin their faith upon the fallible Infallibility of her, and not as Dr. *S.* affirms, upon (that heretical dangerous Book) the Scriptures, which have made Heresies, as wisely said that Cardi-

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nal, when it was enquired how so many Hereſies came into the world: *Why*, ſays he, *we may thank our ſelves for it alone: for had we kept that dangerous Book the Bible in an unknown Tongue, theſe Hereſies had never ſprung ſo thick; but now every private and Lay-heretick puts his expoſition upon the Scriptures.* And was not this anſwered like himſelf, think you, my ſons? Yea certainly: for now we finde it, to our woful experience.

Laſtly, leſt ſimplicity either in Church-Service or Adminiſtration of Sacraments ſhould breed contempt, we have added many more petty matters to make them more commendable, more acceptable to the palat, and our followers more devout; as in our Churches gilded Images, Altars, Super-Altars, Candleſticks, and ſuch-like: In our Maſſings and Church-Service, Golden garments, coſtly Colours, ſtrange Geſtures, warbling and mumbering of Beads, &c. In our Prieſts, ſquare Caps, Bald Crowns, great Hoods: In our Orders, Croſſing, Anointing, Shriving, forſwearing Wedlock, &c. In our Baptiſm, Waſhing of hands, Salting, Spawling, Exorciſing, Croſſing: In Receiving, to come with beards new ſhaven, and an imagination of a bodily and real preſence; which makes Catholikes devoutly to receive, when they are taught and really think it ſo, but in truth none is, but as the Hereticks own myſtically ſo to be. And laſtly, leſt this our jugling ſhould be eſpied, which I your old Father hear begins to be too manifeſt, we have made as ſtrong Fences for Papiſm, as ever did that wicked Beaſt for Mahometiſm. For firſt, we have endeavoured to bury the Scriptures, leſt by that light all our Projects, obſcure deſignes and darkneſs ſhould be diſcovered; which if ſudden care be not taken, I have reaſon to fear it will too too ſuddenly. Yet fear not, the Bowler is fain many times to follow his Game long before he can obtain it; the Angler is fain many times to ſit whole hours by the river-ſide, before he can perſwade the ſilly Fiſh to ſnap up their own deſtruction. We have waited long, and many of our well-deſign'd and heroick Plots (ſuch as was the Gun-powder-treaſon) have miſcarryed: but there may come a time when ——

Secondly, Church-ſervice we have thruſt upon ſilly people in a ſtrange language; Sons, you know well why: for *Simon Magus* was never detected, before Chriſt was preached in *Samaria*.

Thirdly, we have forbidden our followers to confer with the

Hugonots:

Hugonots: for they are always striking at us with the Scepter of the Word, and still cry, *To the Law and the Testimony*, &c.

Further, we tell you, that any thing, though the horridest Murder or Treason you should act, is highly meritorious, so that thereby the Catholike Cause may be respected, and the interest of our Church (I mean, that you may fill your own Coffers) advanced: and that as amongst the *Scythians* he was reputed the bravest Gentleman that spilt most bloud; so I tell you, he is Canonized for the worthiest Catholick, that can bring most souls to confusion.

And now, what can we do more? Yet what doth there else remain, but that you use all diligence, feeding your favourites with strong hope and large promises, standing at the Court-gates with *Absalom*, the lively image of Courtly Politicks, seeming to pity the peoples estate, when his ambitious humour did greedily aspire after his Fathers Kingdom. Even so you my Sons, tell them that their Religion is good, and how I your Father and theirs do pity them, and that if I had the disposition of the Crown, plenty should follow the Scepter, and peace should follow plenty. I say no more unto you, but walk closely, and keep your selves *in tenebris*: For your predecessors, I know not whether to ascribe it to angry Starrs, the influence of the Heavens, neglect of opportunity, want of secresie, by too great security, have had so bad success, that instead of supplanting a Kingdom, they have broke their Necks at Tyburn; and instead of reconciling Souls to the Romish faction, they have united their Heads to a Halter; this cruelty have they sustained for my sake, whom therefore I have Crowned with Martyrdom, and Question not but that they have as good rewards as they deserved. This hoping and expecting to hear the downfal of Hereticks, I am your tender (though by *Hugonots* despised) Father

CLEMENT IX.

FINIS.